

NOTES
DESCRIPTIVE OF THE
PORTRAIT OF J. M. W. TURNER,
R.A.,
PAINTED BY HIMSELF,
AND EXAMPLES OF HIS PICTURES AND SKETCHES,
NOW ON EXHIBITION.

By Robert Walker.

PRICE 3s.6d.

An issue of 150 copies only, illustrated with Photographs of the Portraits of the Great Artist and a Lady, presumably his Wife, the Subjects of his Boating, Yachting, Fishing, Courtship, Marriage, the Honeymoon in the Isle of Wight, &c., 16 in number.

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George Washington

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W.TURNER. 1789.









J. M. W. Turner, R.A.
A Town in the Middle Ages.



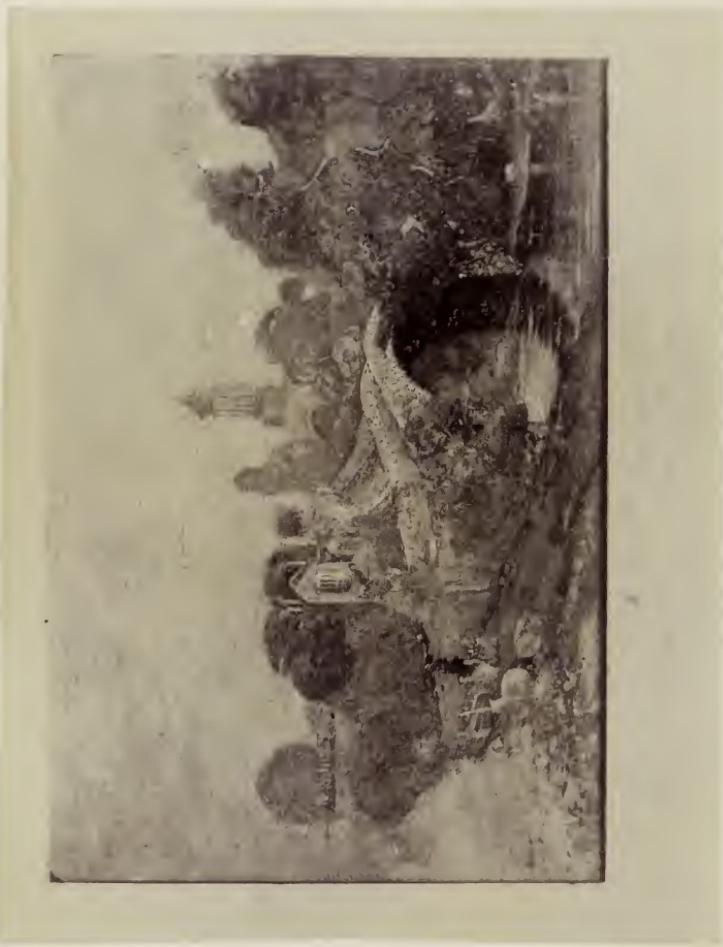
J. M. W. TURNER. R.A.

Sketch for Mill and Lock - 1808





J. M. W. TURNER R.A. 1815.









INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

THE owner of the present exhibition of the works of J. M. W. Turner, R.A., has a conception that some degree of interest and discussion leading to controversy, will arise on the question of its genuine character. Very little is generally known of his early works, painted previous to the commencement of the present century. To the non-readers of his life the great man's hand will be invisible, and a smile of incredulity will be accorded by the most good-natured: the boyish school-day work, the advancing step of sea-painting in the scene "Off the Reculvers," the lover-like simplicity exhibited in the "Romantic Welsh Landscape," the boy and girl lovers' figures can never be associated in common capacities of analogical enquirers with "The Sun rising in a Mist," with "The Wreck of the Minotaur," with "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage," and "The Glorious Téméraire" of his matured powers. He therefore feels it incumbent on himself to offer a few notes of elucidation to the many —to the few they will not be needed—in order to dispel cloudy conceptions on its character.

To write of Turner being the most varied, the most prolific, and the greatest landscape painter of the English school is but to repeat truisms. In this small collection, however, the germ exists in all the varieties—portraits, seascapes, landscapes, architecture, waterfalls, moonlights; scenes abroad and at home; sketches in Scotland and Wales—in that rare vehicle of oil application, of which but a very few were found by his executors, among the nineteen thousand odd at his death. He once told Mr. Monro that he got them too brown, hence their rarity in commerce, and infrequency in notice.

It is now well known that Turner in his early practice emulated the popular painters of the period, whose works sold readily, while his own transcripts of Nature were not appreciated by the public; even after his election to the Royal Academyship, Wilson and Gainsborough's influence predominated in many works, whose qualities he combined with a master's skill. His seapieces, too, possessed the manner of Loutherbourg, but with a freshness and charm not to be found in that master.

It is, however, on the attributes of the Portrait of the great painter that the owner desires to direct the critical eye,—painted at a period subsequent to those grand creations of his mind and hand—“Crossing the Brook,” “The Rise of the Carthaginian Empire,” and “The Fall of the Reichenbach” (in water colours), exhibited in 1815; and culminating in the “Polyphemus,” 1829, and coeval with the grand study of “Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage,” his powers yet in reserve for the magnificence of the “*Téméraire*” of 1839, it must possess an interest unparalleled;—in the history of English Art it stands unique. When Sir Joshua painted his own head repeatedly; Gainsborough, too, on several occasions pourtraying himself; who will proclaim the painter of this work was the least of the trio, and the work itself deserving a lower niche in the Temple of Fame? The owner very much questions which of the three would attain a majority of a preference by profound critics if exhibited on the same wall space—the Sir Joshua at Florence; the Gainsborough in the council-room at the Royal Academy; and this unique example from the hand of the “greatest landscape painter of the English school.” In the unpractised work the chief interest lies. Who can say to what wondrous perfection a life given to its pursuits would have attained in this branch of the Art?

It may be demurred that the position of the face, looking off from the spectator, is against the usual practice of painting before a mirror. The demurrs, however, little know the vast powers of the artist—one who could portray himself in any position. In the present collection he is seen in profile, steering his ‘yacht.’ He shows a back position in the old “Rows of Chester”: he is seen kneeling (looking for a lost fish), from his hat to the sole of his shoe, showing the peculiar steel protection of leather, and which carried him his 25 miles a day, in the “Park Waterfall at Bolton Abbey;” he may have had help, too, from Chantrey making a pencil drawing of his features for an ultimate bust for an “Institution to be called Turner’s Gift.”

It is not generally known that Turner, for a period, was a pupil and student of Sir Joshua Reynolds, and copied his works. Thornbury, in his life, records the following account of his connection with the greatest master of the English school of portrait painting:—

“Turner is now growing up. He had been allowed to copy two of Reynolds’s wonderful portraits; and it is impossible to say what might have been the effect on his future life of this contact with a

great painter's mature mind ; but it was of short duration, for Sir Joshua one day, engaged upon Lady Beauchamp's portrait, finds his eyes beginning to fail, and with a sigh resigns his brush all but for ever. With the death of Reynolds, Turner apparently ceased to think much of portraits, yet his picture of himself at the age of seventeen, now in the Vernon Gallery, shows he had attained no mean skill in that branch of art. Destitute though he may be of the grave, wise firmness of Reynolds, and unequal to the production of mellow reds, pearly greys, and sunny browns, still he must have learnt many secrets of execution from this description of copying.

"It was towards the close of the great portrait painter's career that Turner had access to Reynolds's house for the purpose of copying those exquisite women and dignified men. We can fancy Sir Joshua, with the shrewd face and scarred lip, the white wig, the beaming spectacles, and the ear-trumpet, regarding him approvingly, and patting him on the head as he enters with his square boxwood palette and long mahogany brushes.

"We know for a certainty that the long-haired youth was present as an ardent student on that eventful day, as Sir Joshua was lecturing in the great room at Somerset House. The floor suddenly gave way, a dreadful panic ensued among the lords, and wits, and artists then congregated, but Sir Joshua sat as calm as Jove. I suppose after the first alarm Sir Joshua also retreated with the calmest of those who remained unmoved, for my story has it that in escaping Turner and Sir Joshua were close companions. Little thought he then that the long-haired student, the observant lad who came to his studio to copy, and who on that occasion moved calmly by his side, was a great genius, destined to advance painting beyond the furthest triumph it had at that period achieved."

That Turner at a later period could draw the figure powerfully and nobly, is evident not only from the admirable picture of "Venus and Adonis" (in the collection of Mr. Munro, of Hamilton Place), which is an imitation of Titian, but from a life study (in the same collection), which I am unable to assign to any special period, but which is worthy of Etty for power and of Mulready for correctness. The "Venus and Adonis" was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1849, but "Bacchus and Ariadne," probably a companion subject, appeared in 1840.

The artist of Turner's admiration next to Girten was Reynolds,

He drew his purse to buy Sir Joshua's palette to present to Shee. Hence may be discerned some affinity with the school of the great master of portrait in the colour and technical execution by this his youngest disciple.

The owner here records his grateful thanks to Messrs. Chatto and Windus for their ready accord and kindness in giving permission for this and many other extracts from Thornbury's Life of Turner to appear; without it, indeed, the interest of the work would have been faint, and the story in a measure unreliable. He believes from their continuity—from its commencement to the end—that it would form a second appendix to any future edition this eminent and enterprising firm of publishers may issue of the life of the great artist.

He enters upon the descriptive points of the subjects with the spirit of an analyst. Several incidents belong to the painter's domestic relations, or in which he perpetuates his own person as part of the scene. Yachting, fishing, boating, courtship, and marriage designs, enter freely into the themes. To readers of his life and students of his nature and character these are at once apparent. To all others they convey no other meaning than simple accessories to make up a judicious composition. His intention is to keep the collection together and sell it as a whole, by auction or otherwise, at the reserved price of £1200. "Keep them together," Turner would say on analagous occasion. He believes many owners of the artist's great pictures—the Petworth Gallery, the matchless Farnley Hall Collection, the fine Walton Bridge, for which Mr. Agnew gave £7000 or upwards—would value the portrait alone at double the money. In a recent sale at Christie's, "Helvoetsluys, City of Utrecht," a coeval work exhibited in 1832, realized 6400 guineas; the "Val D'Aosta," 4000 guineas; "Mortlake," another coeval work, 5200 guineas; "Going to the Ball" and "Returning from the Ball," 2800 guineas each; "A Dream of Italy," 1250 guineas. (All these fell to the bidding of Mr. Agnew). Its most appropriate position, however, would be in juxtaposition with the great Polyphemus. He names this price as within the means of many corporate art collections, and the affording an opportunity to see at a glance the advancing steps of a great genius—from the small boy's weak and timid hand to the apex of the masterly portraiture of its embodiment—conveying its very mind in unmistakable characters a supremacy over all its fellows in the art it had chosen to exercise.

its faculties—a contemptuous anger in the flashing steel grey-blue eye and the firm set mouth, at the treatment it had received from the art patrons of the period. “From exhibition after exhibition his pictures came back to him unsold.” “It is a well attested fact,” says Thornbury, “that while tenth-rate Caraccis and sordid Dutch pictures were being purchased by hundreds to fill the galleries of the nobility, Turner’s Venetian pictures found recognition of merit among the merchants of Manchester.”

“Imagine,” says Mr. Ruskin, “what it was to a man to live seventy years in the hard world, with the kindest heart and the noblest intellect of his time, never to meet with a word of sympathy. From the time he knew his own greatness all the world was against him; he held his own, but it could not be without a roughness of bearing and hardening of the temper if not of the heart. No one understood him, no one trusted him, and every one cried out against him.”

The very embodiment of his genius, under these depressing slights and insults, is here fully exemplified by its own act and deed.

J. M. W. TURNER, R.A.

1. PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST, *circa* 1830.

THIS fine head of the greatest landscape painter of the English school stands unparalleled in interest among his compeers in their portraitures. Sir Joshua Reynolds, Gainsborough, and others of high renown had repeatedly transmitted to canvas their re-ispe performances. Many may be seen in the council-room at the Royal Academy and other noted collections, but excepting the portrait painted when young, in the National Gallery, there is no other known from his own hand that is painted with a consciousness of the power that had just then executed the marvellous Polyphemus. There had been no knowledge of its existence until, a few months since, it was found in a state of utter neglect, with a companion portrait of a lady painted by the same hand. Both had been cut out of their frames, and had been folded and compressed for packing; probably coming from the Continent some 25 years since, at which period the late owner purchased them from a dealer at Knightsbridge. Its previous history must remain a matter of conjecture, but it can be readily imagined that the motive for painting it lay in the intention of founding an institution for the maintenance and support of poor and decayed artists, of which particulars may be seen in the will executed in 1831, and this would have been a part of its furniture—the presence of their friend and benefactor. It is well known how futile this intention turned out, and the great likelihood is that he carried it abroad in one of his repeated visits to the Continent; probably he may have painted it at Rome, where he was living and working in 1829. His housekeeper, Mrs. Danby, would have been likely to have known and spoken of its existence had it been painted under her own immediate notice. There were other agencies (of which more hereafter) that had a claim to it, but it is likely that its antecedents will ever remain—like its original—an incomprehensible mystery.

It will be seen that the hand holding paper has been cut away, leaving only a fragment of the thumb. This paper, doubtless, when painted, contained writing that intimated the contents which, in after years, the artist himself thought fit to cancel.

2. PORTRAIT OF A LADY.

PRESUMABLY the wife of the artist. Strong evidences of a marriage will appear in the course of routine of description of each subject of the collection; here it may be stated that in Thornbury's life an attachment to a lady—the sister of Mrs. Trimmer—was formed, but ended in disappointment (another fallacy). Thus in the progress of examination of his note books, in a little red book with a clasp, marked June, 1813, there occurs "*some obscure verses about 'Anna' 'kiss,' 'a look back,' 'toilsome dream,' and 'human joy, ecstasy, and hope,' and the like.*" It is somewhat singular that in a letter to Mr. Trimmer he proposes that the lady should make the advance; adding, that Sandycombe, his Thames villa, was empty, and should change ownership. This was in 1813, and the unconventional mode of proposal doubtless ended this matter of courtship, and the fulfilment of the "*human joy, ecstasy, and hope,*" the result within a brief period after.

The design of a marriage is fully depicted in one of the most remarkable works of the master, and included in the present collection—"The Old Rows of Chester"—and search is being instituted in the registers of the many churches of the old city: it is, however, exceedingly likely that the marriage rites were conducted with great secrecy by special licence, and it may be difficult clearly to arrive at any discovery of corroborative evidence of an act conducted with the tact of his well-known reserve and masterly reticence.

The portrait, as has already been stated, was the companion to his own, and had been much injured and maltreated, so much so that the former owner had altered its form to an oval; the present owner however, for the better harmony of juxtaposition, has restored it to its original square. It will be seen that the manner is much like that of Sir Thos. Lawrence, especially in the eyes, and in its pristine state the face must have been as highly finished as a miniature. The companionship is evident from the exactitude of position; the same turn of heads, the same cast of shadows—especially under the nose—rendering it certain and sure, and beyond cavil or dispute.

3. SCHOOL DAYS AT MARGATE.—“A HOLIDAY.”

THE proclivities of the artist for the sea and its phases are exemplified in this interesting early work, painted probably before the age of 14. The scene represents the young artist in the act of launching, with his oar, a boat in which two ladies are seated. The younger is evidently the sister of his school friend, the other her stepmother. Thornbury relates that this love affair commenced at the age of 13. He was then known to copy Morland in oils, and at the age of 10 could draw a ship with its rig correctly. Painted on oak panel.

7½ by 5 inches.

4. THE ARTIST & HIS FRIEND MR. BELL, THE ENGRAVER, IN A TRIP TO MARGATE.

THORNBURY surmises that this excursion was made by land. He relates, however, “that Lord Egremont used to assert that Turner kept a yacht, but we cannot ascertain this to be the case.” The craft in question is that seen in the view, a Dutch galliot, at that time common in the Thames.

The scene is off the Reculvers, the vessel careering towards Margate under a jib and lugsail, the artist at the helm and his companion directing his attention to the twin towers of the church. In the offing a sloop of war is hove too, signalling a pilot boat with sunlit sail near the shore. The sea is wonderfully rendered in this early work (painted about 1795), and the handling and action of the vessel are perfect. Painted on canvas. 20 by 24 inches.

5. A ROMANTIC LANDSCAPE IN WALES.

A PATHETIC interest must attach to this early work of the young painter. He has depicted his own struggles—uphill endeavours to provide a home for the object of his love, left at Margate. He paints a rough, uphill road, but nearing its summit, and showing a restful valley beyond; on the right a large empty sunlit cottage occurs, waiting to be occupied. Midway down the road the lovers appear, himself in the familiar red cap of the holiday episode, kneeling and offering a bouquet of wild flowers to his companion.

To denote the far-away distance, a woman in Welsh costume is descending the road with a basket on her arm, suggestive of marketing purposes for the young couple,—*probably painted for his promised bride.*

Thornbury tells that here, “through the influence of the wicked stepmother and the suppression of his letters and other tokens of his continued attachment, the girl was induced to believe that he no longer desired to continue the engagement, and she formed another connection, and a day of marriage was fixed. Within a week of the appointed day Turner suddenly arrived from a distant town. He immediately went to visit his accepted bride, and he was frantic at hearing what had occurred. He had written constantly, and, notwithstanding he had received no replies, his faith in her was unshaken; he still loved her with all fervour and all truth, and he urged her in the most passionate terms to break off the alliance she was about to form. Entreaties and adjurations were unavailing, and Turner left her in bitter grief, declaring that he would never marry, and that his life henceforth was hopeless and blighted.”

13 by 11 inches.

6. A WELSH MOUNTAIN STORM.

WAVES of vapour roll up the valley; torrents descend from every declivity. A great wave breaks over a cottage which is seen in the act of collapsing, forming a scene of the utmost desolation. *Painted in a grey monochrome.*

It is not too much to assume that this sketch was an outcome of the bitter grief and agony the artist experienced from the breaking off on the part of his accepted bride from her promise, the incident of the ruined cottage leads to this conclusion. 12 by 16 inches.

7. IRON FOUNDRIES IN WALES, WITH MOON RISING.

PAINTED in emulation of Loutherbourg’s famous Eidophusikon (a combination of scene painting and landscape), which all the world went to see, and of which exhibition Gainsborough was a passionate admirer and Sir Joshua Reynolds a frequent visitor. Thornbury

relates that "Mrs. Loutherbourg grew very jealous of Turner's visits to her husband, and that at last, suspecting the young painter was obtaining all her husband's secrets from him, she shut the door in his face and roughly refused him admittance." The combination of natural moonlight and artificial foundry flame is admirably rendered.

13 by 18 inches.

8. THE OLD BRIDGE OF PONT-Y-PAIN, BETTWYS-Y-COED.

UNDER the arch is seen the famous salmon leap, the morning sun lighting up the parapet and other points with fine effect; beyond is a group of Scotch firs or stone pines, painted with singular truth to nature. Thornbury mentions that "in one of the Farnley drawings there is a large fir, so true, so vigorous, so matchless, that it shows not only that Turner could draw the fir when he chose, but that he might have been one of the finest painters of trees the world ever saw." Painted about 1798 on a mahogany panel. 11 by 13 inches.

9. A FRENCH COAST SCENE, WITH FISHERMEN.

CAPE Grisnez in the distance. In the manner of Claude. Unfinished. Probably made in his first Continental tour in 1802. 5 by 7 inches.

10. THE MILL AND LOCK AT HANWELL.

A FINISHED sketch for the well-known picture, from which it varies in tone of colour, the sky being very pearly in tone and less cloudy, and the absence of the cattle and figures. Painted on a sheet of paper and relaid on canvas. 8 by 10 inches.

Mr. Trimmer informed Thornbury that the sketch was painted in the evening after a visit to his father. The subject engraved in the Liber Studiorum and in the Royal Gallery of British Art.

11. A DISTANT VIEW OF BEESTON CASTLE.

WINDY day with storm clouds. A woman driving cows and sheep, with a rocky foreground. Painted on an old orange-yellow coach-panel. 7 by 10 inches.

12. THE LAKE OF LLANBERIS.

EARLY dawn. Painted on oak panel.

4 by $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

13. A CASCADE OF REICHENBACH, SWITZERLAND.

A BEAUTIFUL work, painted in 1815, the great year of the artist's exhibits at the R.A., in which the "Carthage" and Swiss subjects appeared, with "Crossing the Brook" and the "Great Fall of the Reichenbach," in water colours, now at Farnley Hall—a galaxy unprecedented from one hand. This cabinet example is from one of the minor falls, that enters the valley of Hasle below the great fall. Its chief interest lies in the descent of water illuminated by the evening sun; the foreground of rocks, however, and accessories of goats are in the same beautiful keeping in the contrast of shadow. In the original frame, made by Cooper, whose card of address is affixed at the back, "43 Piccadilly." These premises were occupied by the frame maker in the year 1815 only. See London Directories.

24 by 20 inches.

14. THE BRIG O' DOON, WITH KIRK ALLOWAY.

THE scene of the witches' and warlocks' revels in the immortal "Tam o' Shanter," and the Burns monument in the distance, taken from the banks o' Doon. An unfinished sketch in oil, showing the mark of the artist's thumb on its lower left corner. Painted about the time of his visit to Scotland in 1818, to make drawings for Border Antiquities; on millboard, with the equally interesting "Brigs o' Ayr" at the back, showing a grey luminous sky, originally possessing a rainbow, which has been scraped off by a former owner and the sky restored; it has otherwise suffered from ill usage.

15. THE PARK WATERFALL, BOLTON ABBEY, 1826.

PAINTED in tempera body colour and varnished in imitation of a work in oil. Autumn foliage, with the portrait of Turner fishing. The position of this figure marks an incident in his fishing proclivities. A big trout appears to have carried away his line from the reel, and he is kneeling and bending over the pool in search of it. The dress is characteristic, a wide-tailed coat with large pockets, and the upturned sole of his shoe shod like a horse instead of nails. Thornbury relates that his walks extended to 25 miles a day. Farnley Hall, to which his usual visits to Yorkshire were directed, is about 12 miles from Bolton Abbey.

16 by 11 inches.

16. VIEW OF A TOWN ON AN ISLAND IN THE MEDITERRANEAN.

WITH craft, boats with microscopical figures. Painted on a piece of card, said to have been given by the artist to a lady, *circa* 1836.

17. THE OLD ROWS OF CHESTER.

THE incidents depicted in this extraordinary work convey a revelation appertaining to the life of the gifted artist and great man, of a circumstance hitherto unknown and unsuspected, illustrating in the fullest measure the secretiveness of his nature, and the unbounded reticence on a subject, that continued to the end of his life—the marriage with the lady whose portrait accompanies his in this collection. The design is obvious; every incident conduces to the purpose and conclusion. The principal figures (his own denotes lameness and he walks with a stick—Thornbury relates that at one period in a sketching ramble he snapped a *tendon Achillis*, enforcing limping about with a stick)—the lady in white hat and dress of the period of George IV., and himself in wedding costume; to emphasise this purpose the stronger, a boy behind the couple is pointing with outstretched hand to the unusual spectacle. The accessories before them are equally conclusive. A sun-ray crosses their path to the church, illustrating the adage “Happy the bride the sun shines on.” A feast is provided in a booth at the end of the row, towards which a gipsy in a red cloak is walking; a tipsy market-woman and a man in similar condition are on the steps leading down from the row in Bridge Street; the balustrades are crowded with people; bales of requisites for travel litter the streets; a tilted waggon is being loaded with trunks and other luggage; a characteristic incident in the composition is the horse, old Cropear, fitted with a pad saddle to carry the lady, and newly steel shod for more lasting wear on Continental roads.

There can be no other meaning in these symbols than a marriage; the registers of the Chester churches have been looked into, but hitherto no evidence of the well-known name appears. The secretiveness of his nature would make it highly improbable for

him to disclose in a city where he had been a frequent visitor, and had made it the subject of several drawings, a circumstance he intended to keep with a profound taciturnity. In all probability his instincts, like that of the lapwing, would suggest the design of making Chester to *appear* the scene of its performance. Its apparent Continental character induces a belief in the owner's mind that it occurred in a Continental city of quaint old houses, while the decided English church and provincial figures and market wares would tend to stifle inquiries in quarters he was known to frequent abroad.

"All his life," writes Thornbury, "he had the peculiar love of mystification which is the result of suspicious reserve. As a youth he concealed his processes of water-colours from all but special friends, . . . and at a later period he stole backwards and forwards to the Continent with the jealous secrecy with which a detective officer effects his silent journeys. His charitable intentions were mysteries; his residence was a mystery; where he had been to, where he was going to, and what he intended to do, were all mysteries; and so powerful was this habit of reserve that I have no doubt he died absolutely rejoicing in the fact that even his best friend knew not where he lay hid."

The marriage is likely to have occurred in 1814, following close upon the entry in the little red book of 1813 of the verses about "Anna Kiss, the human joy, a look back, a toilsome dream, and hope." Necessarily the expense of maintaining another establishment awakened him to greater efforts; to meet this the exhibits at Somerset House in 1815 were abnormal. The spirit of industry had been roused, and he sends for exhibition eight works, by the sale of which he hoped to hold his own and maintain his secret. His prices were then but moderate. The list comprises several of his most important works, as may be judged from Thornbury's record and Academy catalogues:—

- 1 "Bligh Sand, near Sheerness. Fishing boats trawling."
- 2 "Crossing the Brook." (£500 said to have been its price).
- 3 "Dido Building Carthage; or the Rise of the Carthaginian Empire." (£100).
- 4 "The Battle of Fort Rock, Val d'Aouste, Piedmont."
- 5 "The Eruption of the Souffrier Mountains in the Island of St. Vincent, at Midnight, on the 30th April, 1812."

- 6 "The Passage of Mount St. Gothard; taken from the centre of the Teufelsbrück (Devil's Bridge), Switzerland."
- 7 "The Great Fall of the Reichenbach, in the valley of Hasle, Switzerland," now at Farnley Hall.
- 8 "The Lake of Lucerne; from the landing-place at Fluelen, looking towards Bauen and Tell's Chapel, Switzerland."

The "wonderful year?" as Thornbury calls it.

"There are men living," writes Thornbury, "who have seen him in bitter anger about the neglect shown to his exhibited pictures." Pointing to a stack of them against a wall he would say: "Don't talk about 'em; all of them came back. They might have had 'em; now they shan't have 'em."

Doubtless the works exhibited in this year were included in the "*stack*"; the most important of them certainly were returned unsold and now enrich the national collection; yet hope sustained him, and the "Fallacies," which had begun to appear three years previous, were not called again into requisition until 1830. He *had* kept his secret. Prosperity, in a worldly sense, had attended him. Suddenly there must have been a terrible catastrophe that had altered the whole tenor of his nature. The "Fallacies of Hope" recur in quotations almost continually from this period until the end of his life.

Stupendous Avalanche! lamentable the wreck; pathetic must be the story, if ever related, of the ending of what appears to have been a happy union; attracting his presence far, far away from his English home, securing it there and making it a field of industry year after year, and where most of his finest conceptions were executed; France, Switzerland, Italy, Holland, &c., affording subjects that appeared on the Academy walls successively at each yearly exhibition—a field that yielded those beautiful creations for the engravers, and were ready to hand when needed for "Rogers's Italy" and "Rivers of France." The sight of these exquisite productions is a convincing proof that happiness attended him; sunshine brightened his days in the frequent company of a wife, never publicly owned. He had doubtless impressed her with reasons for this necessity, and contented her with a promise that she should take her proper place in his English home as soon as policy permitted. The lady of the portrait would be no termagant; her gentle, dove-like eyes are beaming with love and contentment. She had her children to vary the monotony during his necessary

absences. Again let it be repeated, pathetic must be the story of the destruction of this happy union. The retrospection of this period doubtless ultimately destroyed the equilibrium of his brain, and fully accounts for the vagaries of his mind in the latter years of his life, and rendering him irresponsible for any erratic movements. His absolutely living and dying under an assumed name shows the intensity of the effect on his sensitive nature.

It is impossible to ignore Mr. Ruskin's eulogies on his character. Admitting shady qualities inherent in human nature, he is emphatic on points conducive to the due fulfilment of a husband's duty. "He never broke a promise or failed in an undertaken trust. Tenderness of heart (extreme), Uprightness, Generosity, are qualities he admonishes Thornbury to bear in mind in relating the story of his life; yet not to mask the dark side—Sensuality (*appearances against him here*), Obstinacy (extreme), Irritability, and Infidelity, and be sure that he knew his own power." His proclivities for a married state are exemplified by a clause in his will (executed in 1831) to a degree of intolerance of illegitimate intercourse—an interdict of any participation in the benefits of his projected institution by other than poor and decayed male artists *born in England and of English parents and lawful issue*.

"His sense of justice," continues Mr. Thornbury, "was strangely acute." Whatever the cause that terminated the connection, we may be sure he acted with justice in making a provision for the wife's future maintenance. The lady makes no complaint; her death alone probably exposed the evidence of the picture's story, which she had treasured with jealous care. It had been warehoused in the West of England, now over thirty years since, and stated to be of singular character and value, and the case never to be opened; but after twenty-five years' custody the charges had long been in arrears, and no one appearing to claim or take an interest in it, a dealer at Bristol purchased it at a sale for a few pounds, in the belief it was painted by Prout. From him it came into the present owner's hands, who at various times had visited Chester and recognized the "Rows," and, induced by the principal figures parading in gala costume amidst the incongruous elements of the surroundings, proceeded step by step to unravel the story. From the fashion of the costumes it appears to have been painted in the twenties to satisfy the scruples of the lady and to be an evidence in after years of

her position as an honourable matron and true wife. Sketches analogous are mentioned by Thornbury, who found after his death "old gabled houses, bales for composition, balustrades crowded with people, gipsies in red cloaks, &c." It is not too much to assume that the whole work is a composition from these identical studies.



ADDENDUM.

18. THE HONEYMOON IN THE ISLE OF WIGHT.

SINCE the foregoing notes have left the printer's hands an extraordinary link in the chain of evidence as to the marriage has been placed in the possession of the owner. It is a small drawing, little more than a finished sketch, of Shanklin Church with roseate clouds; Sandown Bay and the Culvers in the distance. In this charming sketch the artist has introduced his own person and that of his bride, now in travelling costume. He points, with evident interest, to the picturesque fabric, to which she is turning. The old bay "Cropear," with newly trimmed tail, but with forelegs stiff with travel, harnessed to the gig, suggestive of the wedding tour being made by easy stages and points of interest seized by his ready pencil. He had in his very early practice found the Isle of Wight a field that afforded him congenial subjects. Shanklin had been visited, and its bay sketched, of which the elder Landseer made an engraving; the etching alone, hitherto, is within the knowledge of the owner, and this is without a date. Other subjects occur—engraved by Landseer: Orchard Bay, in the Undercliff, Freshwater Bay, Alum Bay, and the Needles, veering round to Cowes, but all these are in the etched state, and appear unfinished; they show, however, a ready knowledge of the Island's picturesque beauties. He had doubtless followed the steps of his gifted predecessor, Morland, and at one time been influenced by his homely but graphic transcripts, hence this selection for the honeymoon trip. The sequestered vales, almost roadless, and these intersected by countless gates and barriers, affording a quietude and freedom from impertinent observation that would have been highly offensive to his sensitive nature.

This enquiry possibly is only on its threshold: other evidence may accrue. Time may yield works painted in the glow of new-wedded happiness, and presented to a wife calculated to ensure uxorious attention. The origin of many and many a gift of this nature is lost by the natural effusion of time, and chance alone may recover it.

ERRATUM.

In line 24 of page 15 for "Anna Kiss," read "Anna's Kiss."

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